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Afghanistan`s Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) statement on closure of girl`s schools and arrests of protesting students

27 March 2023

The academic year has started again with restrictions, resulting in the absence of female students. Despite national and international efforts, the Taliban have closed the doors of schools and universities to girls, depriving millions of girls and women of access to education and imprisoning them in their homes. This action of the Taliban has left a negative effects on the collective psyche of the people and especially on the spirit of the country`s children.

The AIHRC considers this treatment of the Taliban to be against all human rights values and contrary to the social and cultural customs of the country`s people and condemns it in the strongest terms.

The right to education is a basic human right, as recognized by international human rights declarations and conventions. For instance, it is stated as the source of human rights in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The Universal Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognized by 196 countries, also acknowledges the right to education without discrimination. However, the Taliban has disregarded these international human rights documents and the demands of the country`s people, showing disrespect and indifference towards the fundamental rights of citizens and the basic values of the human rights of children and youth. The AIHRC considers the Taliban`s approach to be a historical persecution and an obvious oppression against the future-making children and young girls of the country.

Beside that yesterday, on March 26th, a group of girls in Kabul protested the lack of access to education but were met with violence from the Taliban. At least three of these protesters, Fatemeh Mohammadi, Ruqiya Saeed, and Malalai Hashemi, were arrested. The AIHRC upholds the right to peaceful protest and demands the immediate and unconditional release of the detainees.

The AIHRC sincerely requests all national and international human rights institutions to continue to advocate against this cruel and shameful decision of the Taliban and stand with the people of Afghanistan to ensure the right to education for girls` education and for the release of arrested protesting girls of the country. Furthermore, the AIHRC calls on the United Nations and all member governments to take positive, helpful, and practical pressures and action instead of ceremonial activities to stop apartheid.

We hope for a prosperous Afghanistan free from discrimination!

Leadership Board of Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan